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DISQUISITION
CONCERNING THE
METAPHORICAL USAGE
AND
APPLICATION OF SLEEP
IN THE
SCRIPTURES.

Pr. 6

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DISCUSSION

CONCERNING THE

METAPHORICAL USAGE



APPROPRIATION OF SELECT

IN THE

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APPLICATION OF SLEEP
IN THE
SCRIPTURES.

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Pr. 6



A

DISQUISITION, &c.

I. **I**T hath been universally allowed, that there is a natural resemblance between Sleep and Death. The Roman orator observes, that Sleep is *the image and figure of Death**; and one of their poets, lamenting a friend who died in his youth, complains that a *perpetual Sleep*† had seized upon him. Stobæus, in his Moral Collections, tells us of one, who when he lay in a drowsy state upon his death-bed, and was asked by a friend how he did, made answer “*Sleep is going to deliver me up to his brother*‡.”

* Cic. *Tusc.* I. 38.

† *Ergo Quintilium perpetuus sopor urget.* Hor. *Od.* I. 24.

‡ Stob. *Ecl.* *πᾶσι δαυδῶν.*

B

But

But the relation between Sleep and Death must needs have been very imperfectly traced by those, who could view the subject only on the darker side. The *Egyptians* indeed seem to have applied the dormant state of some insects to the survival of the soul after the death of the body; and the allusion, if I understand it rightly, was ingenious and elegant; though I have met with no authority whereby it might be shewn how far they carried it.

II. The transformation of the several species of Caterpillars, through their intermediate state of Sleep to that of their splendid investiture in the spring, when they come forth from their winter-quarters in the condition of Flies, is a fact well known to every observer of nature. It is worthy of admiration, that a creature, still preserving its identity, should pass from the baseness of the worm to the agility of a bird; one while crawling upon the ground, and presently traversing the air in a form which is dazzling to the eyes. But it is yet more remarkable, that, in the interval before this change is brought to pass, there should be a middle state of Sleep, in which the bodily powers are suspended, while a principle of animation

animation is continued. It is thought the Egyptians had an eye to this middle state and the change which follows it, in the configuration of their Mummies. The Caterpillar of the Silkworm-moth, and of many other like insects, passes into an *Eruca* or *Chrysalis**, which is swathed about the body and filleted about the upper parts so exactly after the fashion of the bodies anciently embalmed in Egypt, that the resemblance could not be accidental. There is no natural similitude in the lineaments betwixt a Man and an *Eruca*; but the art of the Egyptians effected a very striking one; and they must have been strange philosophers if their art fell to work so uniformly without any design. The sages of that country, who expressed all their notions by symbols, acted agreeable to the plan of their whole system, when they signified the transmigration of the human soul by the transformation of an insect.

A Christian, instructed in the doctrine of the resurrection, may make a much better use of the figure and complete the parallel in a satisfactory manner †: but the Egyp-

* These are the terms used by *Pliny*. Lib. xi. cap. 32.

† This is elegantly done by the author of *Deism revealed*, in a work intitled *Truth in a Mask*. See *Allusion* the first.

tian philosopher could apply it only to his fanciful doctrine of the *metempsychosis*: and to this it could not be accommodated without violence: for the change of the *Eruca* into a feathered fly, is not a transfusion of the same life into a different substance, but an actual regeneration of the same body into a more glorious shape.

III. Natural history hath some other appearances nearly related to this and equally unaccountable: but our design at present is to consider the figurative acceptance of Sleep in the scripture; which is consistent with itself, and delivers such doctrines as are more worthy of our attention, and more agreeable to the order of nature, than the fables of *Egypt*.

IV. When our blessed Saviour went into the house of the ruler of the Synagogue, with the design of raising up his daughter to life, he said to those who were assembled on the occasion, "Why make ye this ado and weep, the damsel is not dead but sleepeth*." The people who were present, taking his words in the literal sense *laughed him to scorn*. Their laughter proceeded, as laughter ge-

* Mark. v. 39.

nerally doth, from a consciousness of superior knowledge : but the scorn was to themselves ; for they laughed only because they were not wise enough to comprehend the meaning of his language. Neither was it much better understood by his own disciples, though it was received with more decency. The death of *Lazarus* gave him an opportunity of using the same expression ; “ Our friend *Lazarus* sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of Sleep *”. Nothing can be plainer than that Christ, by the *Sleep* of *Lazarus*, signified his *Death* ; and by his *awaking*, his resurrection which was shortly to follow. How mean and irrational was it to imagine, that the Saviour of the world should solemnly enter upon a dangerous journey (for such it was) only to disturb a sick friend in that Sleep, which might contribute much to his recovery ! Yet such was the mistake of his disciples : they answered “ Lord, if he sleep he shall do well ; thinking that he spake of taking rest in Sleep”. They had been habituated, as Jews, to rest in the bare literal sense of the scripture, and therefore listened to the

* John xi. 11.

discourses of their master with Jewish prejudice and ignorance. When he delivered to them that figurative admonition, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees", we find them applying it to the insignificant occasion of their own improvidence, because they had omitted to lay in a proper store of bread. On which occasion he thus appealed to them; "O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves because ye have brought no bread?—how is it, that ye do not yet understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees*?" Their error being corrected, and their attention excited by this rebuke, they discovered at length, that *leaven* signified *false doctrine*. The same persons, who were thus slow of apprehension, had received ocular demonstration, that a divine power was present with Christ to supply all their necessities. They had seen a few loaves of bread, by passing through his hands, become sufficient to feed a vast multitude in the wilderness. But they had either forgot the miracle, or knew not how

* Matth. xvi. 11.

to apply the remembrance of it. Their *faith* had forsaken them, and therefore their senses were deficient: for faith would have instructed them, that the literal sense of the expression was mean in itself, and injurious to the speaker; and thence they might have collected, that the leaven of the Pharisees, against which they had frequently been cautioned in plainer language, was that hypocrisy and pride which had inflated that class of men with error, and spoiled the whole mass of their doctrines.

V. When the Death of *Lazarus* was spoken of under a like figure, the expression was misunderstood for want of a proper degree of faith in the hearers. It is observed of the inhabitants of the East, that they were accustomed from time immemorial to figurative and elevated language, even in their common discourse. This might be true: yet there were cases, in which this practice, however common, gave very little help to the understanding. The reception which the discourses of Christ so frequently met with from those of his own time, is sufficient to convince us, that when the figures of his speech were pointed toward spiritual and invisible objects, a principle of faith was

wanting; without which the men of Palestine were no better prepared to discern his meaning, than if they had been born under the frigid zone. So that this instance of slowness of apprehension in the disciples might have been rebuked, (as that other was) in such words as these; “O ye of little faith; “how is it that ye do not understand, that “I spake it not of Sleep but of Death; “since all shall awake in the morning of “the resurrection? The dead do not perish; “they only fall asleep: and as the Sleep “of the night delivers men up to the light “of the succeeding day, so the rest of Death “is but a prelude to immortality.” The expression ought not to have been unintelligible nor even strange to those, who had been accustomed to the language of the scriptures: where it was said of *David*, of *Solomon*, and of other kings of Israel, that when they died they *slept* with their fathers. The prophet *Daniel* had warned them, that they who “*sleep* in the dust of the “earth shall *awake*, some to everlasting “life, and some to shame and everlasting “contempt*.” Such was the style of the

* Dan. xii. 2.

Old Testament: and being so agreeable to the nature of things, it is adopted and used more familiarly by the writers in the New Testament. St. Paul speaks of departed christians, as of those who *sleep in Jesus**; and where he enlarges on the great topic of the resurrection, he describes our Redeemer to us as the *first fruits of them that slept†*; opening it as a new mystery, that *we shall not all sleep*; that is, we shall not all die, or be laid in the grave, inasmuch as many shall be alive at the Lord's coming, and undergo that blessed change instantaneously, the usual passage to which is through the dark valley and shadow of Death.

The general design of the foregoing expressions being too plain to be farther insisted upon, we must now consider the propriety with which they are applied to the subjects of Death and the resurrection: in doing which, I shall follow the steps of a learned writer of the last century; departing from his plan occasionally, where it seems to be capable of improvement.

VI. When Sleep and Death are compared, the likeness holds through every member of the subject, and is agreeable to the soundest

* 1 Thess. iv. 14.

† 1 Cor. xv. 20.

doctrines of the Scripture, in which every mind that is well informed and not ill disposed, would wish to be confirmed.

In Sleep, the senses of the body are under a temporary suspension; the ear heareth not, the eye seeth not; and the whole body is in appearance so lifeless, that it has been doubtful to a spectator in many instances, whether a person were asleep or dead.

But then, in the case of natural rest, it is not the whole man, it is only the earthly part that falleth asleep: the mind is generally then most active and awake. It has a faculty of transporting itself to the most remote places in a moment; can be present with those whose absence it lamented in the day-time; and being as it were taken out of the body into the world of spirits, it can converse in imagination with those who have long since departed from this world, without being sensible that they are numbered among the dead. It is observed by most men, that in the time of Sleep they can think with more freedom, reason with more clearness, compose with greater readiness, and deliver themselves, upon any subject they are acquainted with, without that embarrassment to which the mind is subject,
when

when it is weighed towards the earth by its attendance upon the functions of the body.

Thus also in the other Sleep of Death, the whole man dies not. The body indeed is dead because of sin, but the soul, which according to the promise of Christ can *never die**, is more free and active than when it is present in the flesh. From that plain and positive assurance given to the penitent thief — *this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* — thus much may certainly be inferred, that the souls of the faithful when disengaged from the body, are admitted to a region of felicity, (for such was *paradise*;) that they are nearer to God the fountain of life than while they are in this earthly state; and also as others are members of the same society, that they are in the company of the blessed, who with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob live unto God*; particularly, that being *absent from the body, they are present with the Lord*, whom a cloud too thick for a mortal eye to penetrate, hath received out of the sight of the living.

VII. When a man sleeps, it is a matter of indifference whether he is in a palace or a prison. His mind receives no comfort from

* See John xi, 25, 26.

the magnificence which surrounds his body, neither can it be confined by the walls and bars of a dungeon. If he is rich, he has then no confidence in his wealth; and if he is poor, he suffers nothing from his poverty. The case is the same with him in the Sleep of Death. He may be lodged under a tomb on which the sculptor hath exerted the utmost of his skill, in adorning it with trophies, and inscribing it with titles of honour; yet he is insensible of all these distinctions, which can serve only to feed the vanity of the living. On the other hand, it may be his lot to rest in a common grave covered with a turf, and that turf may be overgrown with the vilest weeds, yet these are defects which will give him no disquiet. The pomp of life may attempt to follow us into the grave; but poverty and riches must part with us at the edge of it, and deliver us all to a state of parity, where “The
 “ prisoners rest together without hearing
 “ the voice of the oppressor: the small and
 “ the great are there, and the servant is
 “ freed from his master*.”

VIII. The preparation for Sleep is nearly the same with the preparation for Death:

* Job iii. 18.

and it is reasonable it should be so; because he that goes to sleep takes his leave of the world, without any absolute assurance that he shall see it again. When we go to take our natural rest, we enter into our chambers, and shut the doors. The grave is such another place of retirement, and is spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, with allusion to a bed chamber—"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing ye that are in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead. Come my people enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast*." Hence the people of God were to learn, that the grave is but the same thing in effect with a bedchamber: and though nature will always conclude it far more terrible to be inclosed by the door of a vault than by that of a bedchamber; yet faith assures us we need not fear to be thus shut up, since he *who liveth and was dead and is alive forevermore hath the keys of Hell and of Death* to release us: with which

* Isa. xxvi. 19. 20.

hope, the saints may be joyful with glory, they may *rejoice in their beds*; or, as the prophet otherwise expresses it, when they “enter into peace, they may rest in their “beds, each one walking in his uprightness*.” From which words it follows (by the way) that as *walking* is a state of action, the intermediate state of Death, here signified, cannot be a state wherein the soul is neither active nor sensible†.

Having entered into our chamber and shut the door, our next step is to recommend ourselves by prayer into the hands of God; as the martyr *Stephen*, when he was falling into that other Sleep, first said his prayers—*Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit*. And lastly, as he that prepares for Sleep puts off his cloaths; so, *naked came we into this world, and naked shall we go out*: But with this difference, that the nakedness of Death extends to the soul as well as to the body. For as the body is the clothing of the soul,

* Isa. lvii. 2.

† If the reader is inclined to examine the doctrine of the scripture and of the primitive church on this subject, I would advise him to consult *Archibald Campbell's* treatise on the *Middle State*; wherein, besides many other interesting particulars, he will meet with the curious *Prælectiones Academicæ* of bishop Overal, *de anima Patrum & Christi*, in opposition to the popish traditions concerning the same argument.

he that is separated from the body is stripped of his raiment; whence we are said in St. Peter's language, to *put off this tabernacle**; as in St. Paul's, when we rise again, we are said to be *clothed upon with our house which is from heaven†*. And it is observable that the body perishes after the example of the garment that is worn upon it; for when it is become useless, worms eat that, as moths eat the other.

IX. All these things being considered, the similitude between Sleep and Death appears to be easy, natural, and very extensive: therefore the metaphor was elegantly and properly applied by those, who called a burying-place or church yard, *Cæmeterium*, a sleeping place or dormitory, wherein the dead which die in the Lord *rest from their labours*.

X. If we go on with the figure, we shall see how naturally it accommodates itself to the prospect of the resurrection; and in this the value of it chiefly consists. The season of Sleep agrees with the state of Death; for they that sleep, sleep in the night, when the earth is involved in darkness. When the sun goes down, men are called away

* 2 Pet. i. 14.

† 2 Cor. v. 2.

from the labours of the body: darkness prevails over the earth, and the hurry and noise of business subsides by degrees into that silent season, which is properly called the *dead of the night*. Sleep is then almost as common as Death, and the dark hemisphere of the earth is like the region of the departed. But the order of the night, with respect to its situation between the past day and the next morning, is the thing we are to insist upon. After the labour of the day, we lie down to sleep; rest in our beds during the continuance of the night, and awake to rise up again at the return of the morning. Such too is the order of the Sleep of Death: for when the business of life is over, we die; rest in our graves during the continuance of the intermediate state, and rise again from them in the morning of the resurrection. This order of things is regularly applied in the expressions of the scripture. The *day* is put for the season of *life*—"Work while it is day"; the night is Death—"The night cometh when no man can work *;" and the morning signifies the resurrection in these words of the Psalmist—"The righteous shall have dominion over

* John. ix. 4.

“ them in the morning,” that is, in the morning of the resurrection; till which, we have no expectation that the saints shall reign, and the righteous be set above the wicked; neither is there any other *morning* that has respect to the *grave*; therefore commentators are clear as to the sense of the passage.

XI. From the order of nature thus understood and applied, we may find support against the fear of Death. Sleep itself, and the times in which we sleep and wake, all conspire to assist the understanding, and give us a comfortable prospect of our future victory over the powers of darkness. The man who should affirm at noon-day that the sun will not go down at night, might deservedly be laughed to scorn. And he would deserve as little regard, who in the midst of life should deny that he is hastening toward his death. So again; when the night is come, how senseless would it be to affirm, that there will be no morning; yet such is the stupidity of the infidel, who denies that death will be followed by a resurrection. The course of nature being obvious to sense, is depended upon by all; but that of redemption, being an object of

C

faith,

faith, is judged improbable, though the goodness of Almighty God is at least as much engaged to fulfil the latter as the former; and it is as certain that the sun of righteousness shall illuminate the regions of death, as that the sun of the next morning shall dispel the darkness of the night: Nay, it is more certain; because we have a divine promise for the one, and nothing but probability for the other.

XII. The knowledge of the heathen extended only so far as his senses would carry him; and therefore he sorrowed without hope, and *through fear of death was all his life-time subject to bondage* *. The christian may express his triumph in the words of the Prophet; “rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light unto me †:” or, in those of the Apostle, “the night is far spent, the day is at hand:” while the heathen sings in a desponding strain;

*Soles occidere & redire possunt;
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda,* Catull.

* Hebr. ii. 15.

† Mic. vii. 8.

*The Sun that sets, with light refined
Returns to gild the plains :
When man's short day hath once declined,
Perpetual night remains.*

How black and dismal is this prospect! a day short and cloudy, perhaps stormy and tempestuous, succeeded by an everlasting night! this gloomy principle operated differently on different persons, according to their several dispositions and circumstances. Some were driven into professed libertinism, giving themselves up to the Atheistic maxim, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The poet on this principle admonishes us never to *defer* any thing that is agreeable, but to snatch the fleeting moments and apply them as fast as possible to the purposes of pleasure and debauchery, such as is not fit to be named;

*Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat incho-
are longam,*

Jam te premet NOX, &c.

Others being disappointed of pleasure, and harrassed with the common evils of life, and foreseeing no future light, added to their ignorance impatience, and to impa-

tience suicide, the natural offspring of infidelity and disappointment. But, God be thanked, we are not under this cloud of ignorance; we are not oppressed with the terrors of perpetual darkness: we are assured, that although *heaviness may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning*. Our faith is taught to penetrate beyond the regions of darkness to a more glorious light, with which all the afflictions of this present time are not worthy to be compared. Nothing terrible should be apprehended from that night, which will at length deliver us up to the great day of Eternity. What can support us under the loss of our friends, but this consideration? No man is afflicted when his friend goes to sleep, because he expects to meet him again when he is awake. And why can we not follow him to the grave with the like assurance? St. Paul instructed his *Thessalonians*, “concerning them which are a-sleep, not to sorrow as others which have no hope* ;” not to be overcome with the despair of heathens, while they entertained the faith of Christians: as if he had said, “your brethren who are departed being only fallen a-

* 1 Thess. iv. 13.

“ sleep,

“ sleep, it would ill become you to lament
“ them as if they were dead and had
“ perished.” Such hopeless lamentation is
as contrary to our profession as to theirs;
so that when we lose a friend, we should
support ourselves upon such a trying occa-
sion with this comfortable reflexion—*He*
is not dead, but sleepeth.

XIII. It may be some discouragement,
when we consider that the Sleep of Death is
so much longer and deeper than that of our
natural rest. But no man is sensible of the
length of that sleep from which he awakes
in the morning: he has no sense of the
progression of time, and seems to have slept
but a moment: The interval betwixt death
and the resurrection may seem equally short.
Adam and his last-departed son may per-
ceive no difference; and a thousand years
may possibly appear to them as it does to
God, even as one day. Neither ought we
to apprehend any difficulty from the depth
and soundness of the Sleep of Death. It is
observed that no noise so soon awakens a
man as that of an human voice; especially
if that voice calls upon him by his proper
name. Now the scripture hath given us to
understand, that we shall be called up by

an human voice, even that of the Son of man: "for the hour is coming, and now" "is, when they that are in the graves shall" "hear his voice, and shall come forth *." We cannot determine whether this voice shall call upon us by name; though it is not improbable; for when *Peter* raised the disciple at *Joppa*, he said, "*Tabitha arise*;" and when Christ called upon his dead friend, he said, "*Lazarus come forth*." But whatever may become of this conjecture, the conclusion will remain certain, that it is as easy for the Son of man to call the dead from their graves, as for us to awaken a person out of Sleep.

XIV. It is a matter of infinite importance to us *how* we are likely to rest in our last Sleep: for which purpose these few directions are necessary to be observed, and are proper to the subject. Let it be remembered then, that as they who spend the day in idleness, and the evening in riot and excess, never rest well in the night: so they whose hearts are overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, will hereafter be disturbed with the fearful watchings of a distempered mind,

* John v. 28.

and annoyed with the fumes of a guilty conscience: they will be "scared with
" dreams, and terrified with visions, and
" be full of tossings to and fro till the
" dawning of the day *." But he who
hath employed himself in the preceding
day by *working out his Salvation*, will rest
the better for it in the night; for *the Sleep
of a labouring man is sweet †*.

Extremes are here to be avoided as upon
other occasions. It is agreed that the most
comfortable rest is preceded by moderate
eating; and that absolute emptiness may
breed as much disquiet as surfeiting and ex-
cess. *The hungry man dreameth and behold he
eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.*
No man therefore should depart from this
world, till he hath first sat down to the
supper of the Lamb; for this is the pledge
of his future resurrection; the *viaticum*,
in the strength of which he is to pass
through the shadow of death. If God is
pleased to grant the opportunity upon a
death-bed, this last duty should never be
neglected. Then we may "lay ourselves
" down in peace and take our rest, for
" the Lord will make us to dwell in

* Job vii. 4.

† Eccl. v. 12.

“ safety ;” or, as the disciples said to Christ concerning *Lazarus*, “ *If thus we sleep, we shall do well.*”

XV. The uniformity of expression concerning our present subject, which is so observable in the Old and New Testament, must necessarily imply an uniformity of doctrine. The gospel hath illustrated the doctrine of a resurrection by a metaphorical allusion to sleeping and waking; but in so doing it hath only adopted the language of the Law and the Prophets. As the same mode of expression, so the same doctrine is common to the two Revelations of Moses and of Jesus Christ. The Patriarchs and Kings under the Old Law went to *sleep with their fathers* in the same hope, which was afterwards more clearly published and defined by the gospel. St. *Paul*, before the writing of the books of the New Testament, calls the resurrection of the dead the *hope of Israel*; * and whence could the church collect that hope in old time, but from the Law and the Prophets? Our Saviour himself established the notion of a resurrection against the Sadducees, by appealing to a

* Acts xxviii. 20. compared with ch. xxiii. 6. and xxvi. 6, 7, 8.

single passage in the writings of Moses; against which, impudent as they were, they had nothing to answer*. The passage itself was indirect; but the inference from it was so obvious and natural, that it could not be evaded. The same doctrine is intimated in many other passages; not by literal expression, but by inference and similitude, the usual modes of instruction throughout the whole Old Testament. And though the carnal Jews were little the wiser for the information thus communicated (as many christians are not much the wiser now) yet the intention and meaning of similitudes, so universally introduced, must have been obvious to those who were spiritually minded, and took the pains to compare the language of the scripture with itself. It would be very imprudent to judge of the Law and its contents by what the Sadducee found there. He could discern neither the Resurrection nor any thing else that was of a spiritual nature. And who will wonder at it, when his younger brother the *Socinian* can read the New Testament without discerning the doctrine of the christian Redemption, or the divinity of the

* Matth. xxii. 31. &c.

Redeemer?

Redeemer? The Pharisee is said to have despised other men, presuming on his own righteousness; and the Saducee in all probability despised them much more, presuming on his own wisdom; while in fact he *knew neither the Scriptures nor the Power of God*. Manasseh Ben Israel, a learned Jew, who wrote on the *Creation and Resurrection*, produces this among other arguments, that *Abraham, Jacob, and Moses*, are said to *sleep* and be *gathered to their fathers*: “ the
 “ Patriarch Jacob (says he) preparing for
 “ death, used those words, *I shall sleep*
 “ *with my fathers* * ; in the first of which
 “ he gives us a sign of the Resurrection ;
 “ for he who *sleeps* awakes naturally. In
 “ the remaining part of the sentence, *with*
 “ *my fathers*, he shews the immortality of
 “ the soul ; because the dead, with respect
 “ to their bodies, are nothing. The Scrip-
 “ ture hath the same meaning where it saith
 “ of Abraham, that he was *gathered to his*
 “ *people* ; signifying to us by this expression,
 “ that their souls had survived the death of
 “ their bodies. It would be absurd to un-
 “ derstand it of their bodies ; for Moses was
 “ commanded of God to go up into mount

* Gen. xlvii. 30.

“ *Abarim*,

“ *Abarim*, and to die there and be gathered
 “ *to his people*: but the fathers of Moses
 “ were not in Mount Abarim*.” So
 reasons this Jew, with a sagacity not un-
 worthy of a christian. And those of his
 fathers who had their eyes open, could see
 through the temporal œconomy of the law,
 and distinguish those eternal rewards of faith,
 which were offered to the Patriarchs before
 the civil establishment of their nation in the
 land of Canaan, when the favourites of God
 were led about from place to place as pil-
 grims and strangers upon earth.

If by the *Laws of Moses* we understand
 the whole revelation in the Pentateuch, it
 certainly presents us with two different
 forms of theological polity; under the
 former of which, the servants of God were

* Jacobus Patriarcha accingens se ad mortem, ait, *Dormiam cum patribus meis*. Hic primâ voce innuit resurrectionem: nam qui dormit, naturaliter expurgiscitur. Cum autem inquit, *cum patribus meis*, eo ostendit animam esse immortalem: nam mortui, ratione corporis, nihil sunt. Hoc ipsum scriptura indicatum vult, cum de Abrahamo ait, quod sese ad populum suum collegerit. Eo ipso loquendi modo significat, animam eorum post mortem superflitem manere. Neque vero istud intelligi potest de corpore. Nam Deus dicit Mosi, *ascende in montem Abarim istum, & morieris in monte in quem tu ascendens ibi. Et collegeris ad populum tuum*. At Patres Mosi non erant in monte Abarim. De *Resurrect. Mort.* cap. 9. § VI.

trained up to a spiritual life of faith and hope, through a course of peregrination and persecution: but under the latter, they were exercised with a temporal settlement and a ceremonial ritual. The former law of faith, as the apostle argues*, could not be made of none effect by the law of ceremonies which came after: and the Jew who did not understand both, and think himself bound to follow both, had no right to call himself a disciple of Moses.

It was therefore an hope common to all the Jews, except the Sadducees, who perversely took advantage of the worldly Elements in the ceremonial law, and were but little better than Deists, that there would be a resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Messiah: and though the general accomplishment of this hope was reserved for his second coming, a foretaste of it was given at his first, when the *bodies of saints which slept arose and appeared unto many*†. It was then made evident, that his sufferings and merits had overcome the sharpness of Death, and purchased a release for the prisoners of hope. That earthquake, which rent the rocks, did also open

* Gal. iii. 17.

† Matth. xxvii. 52, 53.

the graves of the dead, and many of the faithful, who had rested under the old dispensation, were awakened at the departure of that supernatural darkness, which had covered the earth during the time of our Saviour's passion *.

XVI. I cannot leave the subject without observing, that the images of sleeping and waking are also applied in a moral sense to the mind and understanding. The mind hath a figurative Sleep as well as the body; but with this difference, that the scripture which signifies the Death of the body by a state of Sleep, speaks of this Sleep of the mind as a state of Death. It denotes that stupidity of ignorant and careless men, who are dead to truth, to religion, to virtue, to immortality, and all other objects, for the sake of which, life and sense are conferred upon rational beings. So long as they are asleep to all those things, for which they ought to live and act, they are not reckoned to be alive, but dead. That expression of our Saviour—*Let the dead bury their dead* †,

* There is a difficulty here in the Text, which commentators remove, by supposing that the saints were awakened at the death of Christ during the earthquake; and that they appeared in the holy City after his resurrection. In this sense it is taken by the author.

† Matth. viii. 22.

—belongs to persons in this state; and though it may sound like a contradiction, it is useful and important when properly understood. To such the apostle calls, alluding to a passage in the prophet Isaiah, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*." The dead are called upon to awake out of Sleep; but the spiritual sluggard is commanded to arise from Death; his Sleep being as much more dangerous than Death, as Death is more terrible in appearance than common Sleep. If a christian relapses into this state after the gospel hath called him out of it, there is little hope that he will ever be awake again to any good purpose. Pleasure, riches, and the cares of life, act as opiates; and the unhappy people, on whom they operate, know little more of their real condition than if they were in a dream. At last the charm will be dissolved, and the objects to which their fancy hath attributed substance and importance will be empty as the visions of the night, which vanish as soon as we are awake. When they are like to be alarmed, either by the word of God or the visitations

* Eph. v. 14.

of his providence, the enemy of mankind encourages them in their security, administers some new potion to stupify their consciences, and persuades them they may safely sleep on and take their rest. The mind in this sluggish state is fond of darkness, involving itself in error and scepticism, and dreading the light of truth, as the thief hides himself from the return of the morning. How much more dreadful will be the morning of the resurrection; when every sluggard must awake, and every deceiver shall be dragged out to the light! This is the hour, in which they shall wish for the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them: but the night is departed for ever, and all Sleep is departed with it. The natural world and its vicissitudes are swallowed up in the spiritual, in which men must live, act, and be awake for ever, not as men but as spirits. This consideration will comfort those, who lament that they lose in Sleep so much of that precious time, which they would bestow upon the cultivation of the mind, to the honour of their Maker, and the benefit of their fellow-servants. And it is as terrible to reflect, that the miseries of another life,

to those who shall experience them, will have no intermission. But the thought is necessary for us all: and they who make the proper use of it will have this advantage, that as the fear of sin increases in them, in the same proportion will the fear of Death be diminished.

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4 OCT 58

